



FACT SHEET – The United States Response to Piracy off the Coast of Somalia

Fighting piracy is a vital element of the United States' strategic objectives in Somalia, which are to help this stressed nation to *regain stability, eliminate terrorism, and respond to the humanitarian needs of its people*. United States actions, taken in concert with those of other concerned countries, are consistent with its traditional interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and safety of the seas, and in protecting American citizens and ensuring access to essential resources.

The U.S. Government Counter-Piracy Steering Group. An executive-level body created to implement the National Action and Partnership Plan to Combat Piracy off the Horn of Africa, this group is co-chaired by the Departments of State and Defense and reports to the National Security Council. Also represented on this group are the Departments of Homeland Security, Justice, Treasury, Transportation, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Encouraging International Cooperation and Action at Sea. The United States has worked in close consultation with other members of the United Nations Security Council to adopt Resolutions 1816 (2008), **1838** (2008), **1846** (2008), **1851** (2008), 1897 (2009) and 1950 (2010), authorizing international action in Somalia against pirates. In addition, the United States helped to create the international **Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia** to help coordinate and expand national counter-piracy efforts. The U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard support and contribute to the Combined Maritime Force's Task Force 151 to undertake counter-piracy operations in the region. The United States also supports **NATO Operation Ocean Shield** and European Union Naval Forces' **Operation ATALANTA**. The United States actively supports prosecution of suspected pirates by regional states, and through the Department of Justice has demonstrated readiness to pursue prosecution itself when its own citizens and interests are attacked. Finally, the United States works with and through UN agencies such as the **International Maritime Organization**, the **UN Office on Drugs and Crime**, and other partners to support efforts to develop regional maritime security sector capacity development.

For further information, please consult: <http://t.state.gov/t/pma/oppa/piracy/index.htm>

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